

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

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CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

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TAGS: PFOR, AO, CG

SUBJECT: U.S. PRESS TREATMENT - ZAIRE

1. FOLLOWING IS BRIEF ROUNDUP OF U.S. PRESS COVERAGE OF
EVENTS IN ZAIRE.

2. PRESS TREATMENT APRIL 13 - 14:

(A) JOURNAL OF COMMERCE (4/13)

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-- TONY KOENDERMAN REPORTS FROM PRETORIA ON SOUTH AFRICAN
CONCERN FOR "ITS STRONGEST ALLY" IN BLACK AFRICA, "NOTING
THAT ZAIRE IS SOUTH AFRICA'S MOST VALUABLE TRADING PARTNER
NORTH OF THE ZAMBEZI RIVER AT DOLLARS 46 MILLION WORTH OF
EXPORTS PER YEAR. ALSO MENTIONS ZAIRE'S 20,000 MT OF
COPPER EXPORT VIA RSA EACH MONTH, AND REPORTS AIR FREIGHT
SERVICES FROM SOUTH AFRICA HAVE BEEN DISRUPTED BY NEED TO

CARRY MORE FUEL FROM JO'BURG AND LESS GENERAL CARGO.
PRETORIA'S DOLLARS 23 MILLION LINE OF CREDIT TO ZAIRE
FOR FOODSTUFFS HAS BEEN EXHAUSTED AND WHETHER IT WILL BE
RENEWED IS OPEN TO DOUBT.

(B) THE NEW YORK TIMES (4/14)

-- UNDER THE HEADING "WHO LOST AFRICA?" WILLIAM SAFIRE
PROVOCATIVELY POINTS THE FINGER AT ANDREW YOUNG AND GEORGE
MCGOVERN. HE SEEMS TO BE SAYING THAT A POLICY OF APPEASING
CUBA AND RESPONDING BUT WEAKLY TO ZAIRE'S APPEAL FOR
HELP ARE TANTAMOUNT TO WRITING OFF AFRICA TO ARMED
COMMUNIST AGGRESSION.

-- THE TIMES CARRIES AN INSERT IN THE EDITORIAL COLUMN
CORRECTING SOME CONFUSION ABOUT TRIBAL NAMES MENTIONED IN
YESTERDAY'S COLUMN ON ZAIRE.

-- MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN REPORTS FROM KINSHASA, THAT
MOROCCAN TROOPS ARE TAKING POSITIONS AROUND KOLWEZI IN
APPARENT PREPARATION FOR AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST KATANGAN
INVADERS.

(C) THE WASHINGTON POST (4/14)

-- A STORY COMPILED FROM NEWS DISPATCHES REPORTS THAT A
ZAMBIAN VILLAGE WAS BOMBED BY ZAIRIAN PLANES. MEANWHILE
MOROCCAN TROOPS ARE PREPARING FOR AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST
KATANGAN INVADERS. THE ANGOLAN FOREIGN MINISTER PAOLO
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JORGE HAS WARNED THAT THE CONFLICT MAY RESULT IN AGGRESSION
AGAINST ANGOLA.

-- FROM KOLWEZI, ROBIN WRIGHT REPORTS ON SIMILARITIES
BETWEEN MOROCCAN AND CUBAN TROOPS IN AFRICA. BOTH IN THEIR
APPEARANCE AND IN THEIR REASONS FOR BEING THEIR.

-- YVES GAYARD OF AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE REPORTS THAT THE
PREPARATIONS FOR THE FRENCH AIRLIFT OF MOROCCAN TROOPS
TO ZAIRE WAS A WELL KEPT SECRET.

(D) THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR (4/14)

-- IN AN ARTICLE ABOUT BRZEZINSKI AND U.S. - SOVIET REL-
ATIONS DANIEL SOUTHERLAND WRITES OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S
INTENTION TO AVOID ANY DEEP INVOLVEMENT IN ZAIRE.

-- JIM BROWNING WRITES FROM PARIS OF GISCARD'S ASSURANCES
TO THE FRENCH PEOPLE THAT FRANCE WILL NOT BECOME INVOLVED

IN A "VIETNAM TYPE" COLONIAL WAR IN ZAIRE.

3. EXCERPTS FROM AMBASSADOR ANDY YOUNG'S INTERVIEW ON NBC-TV'S "TODAY" PROGRAM, APRIL 14 FOLLOW:

BROKOW: MR. YOUNG, THE UNITED STATES IS SENDING GENERAL MOBUTU ANOTHER DOLLARS 13 MILLION IN NON-LETHAL AID TO HELP HIM IN ZAIRE. NOW, THERE ARE KATANGA SECESSIONISTS.

ITS A KIND OF A TRICKY STORY FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE WATCHING AND DON'T HAVE MUCH FAMILIARTITY WITH IT. BUT IT'S ESSENTIALLY A CIVIL WAR GOING ON IN ZAIRE, WOULD YOU AGREE WITH THAT?

YOUNG: ONLY PARTIALLY. I THINK THAT IT'S A REHASH OF SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN GOING ON SINCE ABOUT 1963. AND THESE KATANGA GENDARMES HAVE BEEN OVER IN ANGOLA FOR OVER - YOU LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KNOW, LAST SEVEN OR EIGHT YEARS AT LEAST. THEY'VE FOUGHT WITH EVERYBODY, AND ALL OF A SUDDEN, THEY DECIDED TO COME HOME. THAT, I THINK, PRESENTS A COMPLICATION, THAT IT IS IN SOME SENSE A CONTINUATION OF AN OLD TRIBAL DIVISION. THE LINES OF NATIONS IN AFRICA WERE DRAWN WITHOUT ANY CONSIDERATION -- GEOGRAPHIC BARRIERS OR TRIBAL LINES, AND THEY'RE VERY ARTIFICIAL, AND ALMOST EVERY AFRICAN NATION HAS SOME KIND OF BORDER PROBLEMS.

BUT IN ZAIRE, BORDER PROBLEMS ARE COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT THE NEIGHBORING STATE, ANGOLA, IS A MARXIST STATE.

BROKAW: MR. AMBASSADOR, IF WE ARE INTERESTED IN PRESERVING AND ENCOURAGING SELF-DETERMINATION FOR AFRICAN STATES, WHY ARE WE OFFERING DOLLARS 13 MILLION IN ANY KIND OF AID TO ZAIRE, WHEN THE LINES ARE NOT CLEARLY DRAWN IN THAT WAR?

YOUNG: WELL, OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS BEEN WITH THE NATION OF ZAIRE. ZAIRE'S BEEN A VERY GOOD FRIEND OF OURS. FOR A LONG TIME IT WAS THE ONLY NATION IN AFRICA THAT WOULD SPEAK UP IN BEHALF OF ANY AMERICAN INTEREST. PRESIDENT MOBUTU HIMSELF ON MANY OCCASIONS VERY COURAGEOUSLY DEFENDED THE UNITED STATES AT THE CONFERENCES OF THE NON-ALIGNED. AND ESSENTIALLY, WE HAVE PLEDGED TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF ZAIRE DEVELOP THEIR NATION. IT'S ALSO ONE OF THE RICH NATURAL RESOURCE BASINS IN AFRICA -- IN THE KATANGA COPPER MINES, AND THE SO-CALLED SHABA PROVINCE -- AND I THINK THAT OUR LONG-TERM INTERESTS ARE IN THE STABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONS OF AFRICA.

NOW, WHAT WE TRIED TO DO WAS, IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT, WAS TO CONTINUE A RELATIONSHIP OF SUPPORT TO ZAIRE WITHOUT GETTING IN THE FIGHTING, AND WITHOUT MAKING IT AN AMERICAN BATTLE. THE FRENCH, THE MOROCCANS, OTHER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AFRICAN STATES HAVE PLEDGED MILITARY SUPPORT. I THINK WE WISELY REFRAINED FROM SENDING ANY ARMAMENTS. WE DID DECIDE, THOUGH, THAT THERE WERE MANY THINGS THAT IN THE NORMAL COURSE OF EVENTS - LARGELY FOOD - THAT WE WOULD

BE SENDING TO ZAIRE ANYWAY, AND YOU DON'T WANT TO ABANDON A NATION BECAUSE IT'S IN TROUBLE.

BROKAW: LET ME ASK YOU THIS. ARE WE THEN NECESSARILY ALIGNING OURSELVES WITH GENERAL MOBUTU'S POSITION, THAT WHAT HE IS FIGHTING HERE IS A CUBAN AXIS, A CUBAN-SOVIET AXIS, THAT THE SECESSIONISTS ARE BEING SUPPORTED BY CUBA AND BY THE SOVIET UNION, AND SO ARE WE TAKING ON THE SOVIET UNION AND CUBA AS WELL BY ALIGNING OURSELVES WITH MOBUTU?

YOUNG: NO, AND I THINK THAT'S THE CAREFUL DISTINCTION WE'VE MADE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF NIGERIA ASKED BOTH THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION NOT TO MAKE THIS A THEATRE OF BIG POWER CONFLICT. WE OBLIGED BY NOT SENDING IN WEAPONS. WE ENCOURAGED THE NIGERIANS TO TAKE ON THE TASK OF MEDIATION. AND I THINK WHAT WE'VE TRIED TO DO IS ALIGN OURSELVES WITH THE TERRITORIAL, THE CONCEPT OF THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IN ZAIRE, AND OF SELF-DETERMINATION BY THE PEOPLE OF ZAIRE, BUT NOT GET IN THE MILITARY CONFLICT.

BROKAW: DO YOU AGREE WITH GENERAL MOBUTU ABOUT THE ROLE OF CUBA AND THE SOVIET UNION IN THE ZAIRE SITUATION?

YOUNG: I THINK THAT IT'S NOT AS CLEAR TO US AS IT SEEMS TO HIM.

BROKAW: BUT HE'S CLOSE TO IT.

YOUNG: AH, MAYBE NOT.

BROKAW: HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN HIS OWN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNTRY?

YOUNG: WELL, I THINK IF HE'D KNOWN WHAT WAS GOING ON HE
WOULDN'T HAVE THIS PROBLEM RIGHT NOW, THAT THE PROBLEMS IN
KATANGA HAVE BEEN THERE FOR A LONG, LONG TIME. AND HE'S
NOT BEEN ABLE TO DEAL WITH THEM. I THINK THAT -- YOU
KNOW -- I DON'T BLAME HIM FOR THAT. HE TOOK OVER A
COUNTRY THAT THE BELGIANS LEFT WITH ONLY TWO COLLEGE GRAD-
UATES. SO, HE'S DONE IN SOME WAYS A REMARKABLE JOB. AT
THE SAME TIME, I DON'T KNOW THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE OUGHT TO BE COMMITTED TO DO HIS JOB FOR
HIM. I THINK THAT WE ARE IN A SUPPORT POSITION, BUT
WE SHOULDN'T MAKE IT OUR FIGHT.
VANCE

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